



Labor Market Analysis: 1240.30 – Dental Laboratory Technician 51.0603 – Dental Laboratory Technology/Technician *Dental Laboratory Technology*

Los Angeles Center of Excellence, August 2026

Program Endorsement:	Endorsed: All Criteria Met	☐	Endorsed: Some Criteria Met	☒	Not Endorsed	☐
Program Endorsement Criteria						
Supply Gap:	Yes	☒	No	☐		
Living Wage: (Entry-Level, 25 th)	Yes	☐	No	☒		
Education:	Yes	☒	No	☐		
Emerging Occupation(s)						
Yes		☐	No		☒	

SUMMARY

This report analyzes whether local labor market demand is being met by community college programs aligned with the identified middle-skill occupation¹ or whether a shortage of workers exists. Labor market demand is measured by annual job openings while education supply is measured by the number of awards (degrees and certificates) conferred on average each year.

Based on the available data, there appears to be a supply gap for the one identified middle-skill occupation in the region. While entry-level wages are lower than the self-sufficiency standard wage in both Los Angeles and Orange counties, half of current workers in the field have completed some college or an associate degree as their highest level of educational attainment.

Recommendation: Due to two of three program endorsement criteria being met, the Los Angeles Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research (LA COE) endorses this proposed program.

Key Findings

Supply Gap

- 338 annual job openings are projected in the region through 2030. This number is greater than the three-year average of 36 awards conferred by educational institutions in the region.
 - In California, there is projected to be 591 job openings annually for *dental laboratory technicians* through 2030.

¹ Middle-skill occupations typically require some postsecondary education, but less than a bachelor's degree. The COE classifies middle-skill jobs as the following:

- All occupations that require an educational requirement of some college, associate degree or apprenticeship;
- All occupations that require a bachelor's degree, but also have more than one-third of their existing labor force with an educational attainment of some college or associate degree; or
- All occupations that require a high school diploma or equivalent or no formal education but also require short- to long-term on-the-job training where multiple community colleges have existing programs.

- More than one-third of these job openings in the state are located in Orange County (228 annual openings), and more than half are located in the Los Angeles/Orange County region (338 job openings).

Living Wage

- \$16.98 is the typical entry-level hourly wage for *dental laboratory technicians*, which is lower than Los Angeles County's self-sufficiency standard hourly (\$24.03/hour).²

Educational Attainment

- A high school diploma or equivalent is the typical entry-level education for *dental laboratory technicians*, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).
- 50% of workers in the field have completed some college or an associate degree, according to national educational attainment data.

Community college supply

- 2 community colleges issued awards related to *dental laboratory technology* in the greater LA/OC region.
- 36 awards (degrees and certificates) were conferred on average each year between 2023 and 2025.

Other postsecondary supply

- No educational institutions in the region have conferred awards in programs related to dental laboratory technology over the past three years.

TARGET OCCUPATION

LA COE prepared this report to provide regional labor market and postsecondary supply data related to one middle-skill occupation:

- ***Dental Laboratory Technicians (51-9081)*** Construct and repair full or partial dentures or dental appliances.³

OCCUPATIONAL DEMAND

Exhibit 1 shows the five-year occupational demand projections for *dental laboratory technicians*. In the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region, the number of jobs related to this occupation is projected to slightly decrease by less than 1% through 2030. However, there will be more than 300 job openings per year through 2030 due to retirements and workers leaving the field. The majority of jobs in 2025 for *dental laboratory technicians* (66%) were located in Orange County.

Since the only two dental laboratory technician programs in California are located at community colleges in the Los Angeles/Orange County region, the labor market demand data for California statewide is also included in Exhibit 1. In 2025, there were 4,817 *dental laboratory technicians* employed throughout the state. There will be approximately 591 annual openings in California for *dental laboratory technicians* through 2030. Of the *dental laboratory technicians* job openings in

² Center for Women's Welfare, University of Washington. (2024). *The self-sufficiency standard for California 2024*. <http://selfsufficiencystandard.org/California>.

³ [Dental and Ophthalmic Laboratory Technicians and Medical Appliance Technicians \(bls.gov\)](https://www.bls.gov/occupations/dental-and-ophthalmic-laboratory-technicians-and-medical-appliance-technicians)

California projected through 2030, more than one-third are located in Orange County (228 job openings) and more than half are located in the Los Angeles/Orange County region (338 job openings).

Exhibit 1: Current employment and occupational demand, Los Angeles and Orange counties⁴

Geography	2025 Jobs	2030 Jobs	2025-2030 Change	2025-2030 % Change	Annual Openings
Los Angeles	943	919	(24)	(3%)	110
Orange	1,864	1,883	19	1%	228
Los Angeles/Orange County Regional Subtotal	2,807	2,803	(5)	(0%)	338
California Total	4,817	4,776	(41)	(1%)	591

Detailed Occupation Data

Exhibit 2 displays the current employment and projected occupational demand for the target occupation in Los Angeles County. The average percentage of workers aged 55+ across all occupations in the Los Angeles/Orange County region is 26%; occupations with a larger share of workers aged 55 and older typically have greater replacement needs to offset the amount of impending retirements. On average, 81% of workers across all occupations in California are employed full-time.

Exhibit 2: Detailed employment and occupational demand, Los Angeles County⁵

Occupation	2025 Jobs	2030 Jobs	5-Yr % Change	Annual Openings	% Aged 55 and older	% Full Time Workers
Dental Laboratory Technicians	943	919	(3%)	110	34%	100%

WAGES

The labor market endorsement in this report considers the entry-level hourly wages for *dental laboratory technicians* in Los Angeles County as they relate to the county's self-sufficiency standard wage. Orange County wages are included below in order to provide a complete analysis of the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region.

Los Angeles County

The typical entry-level hourly wages for *dental laboratory technicians* are \$16.98, which is below the self-sufficiency standard wage for one adult (\$24.03 in Los Angeles County). Experienced workers can expect to earn wages of \$28.50, which is higher than the self-sufficiency standard (Exhibit 3).

⁴ Five-year change represents new job additions to the workforce. Annual openings include new jobs and replacement jobs that result from retirements and separations.

⁵ Ibid.

Exhibit 3: Earnings for occupation in Los Angeles County

Occupation	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25 th Percentile)	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings (75 th Percentile)	Median Annual Earnings*
Dental Laboratory Technicians	\$16.98	\$21.68	\$28.50	\$45,100

*Rounded to the nearest \$100

Orange County

The typical entry-level hourly wages for *dental laboratory technicians* are \$17.92, which is below the self-sufficiency standard wage for one adult (\$27.13 in Orange County). Experienced workers can expect to earn wages of \$29.59, which is higher than the self-sufficiency standard (Exhibit 4).

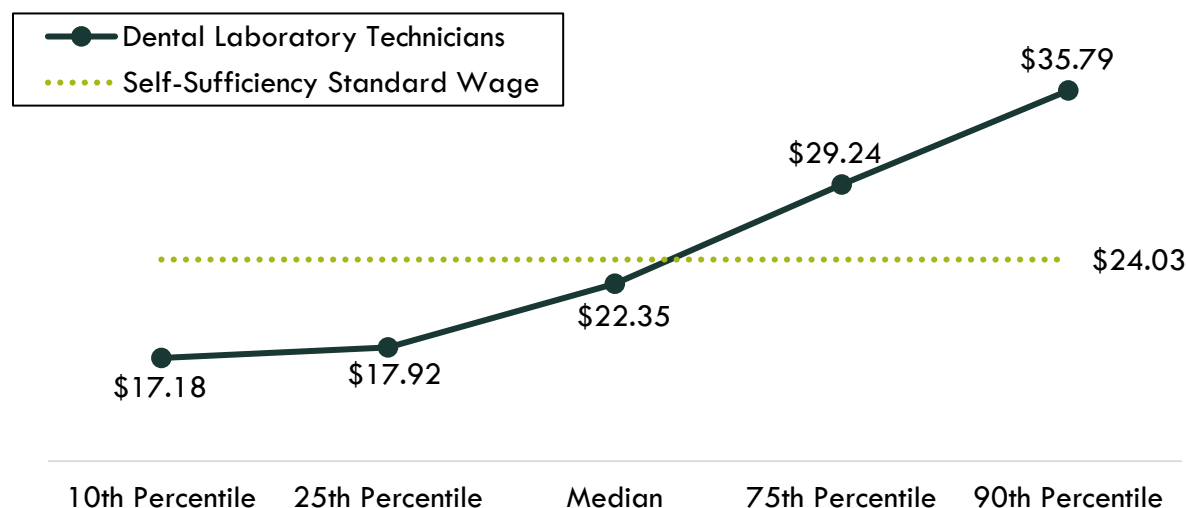
Exhibit 4: Earnings for occupation in Orange County

Occupation	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25 th Percentile)	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings (75 th Percentile)	Median Annual Earnings*
Dental Laboratory Technicians	\$17.92	\$22.75	\$29.59	\$47,300

*Rounded to the nearest \$100

Across the greater Los Angeles and Orange County region, the average entry-level hourly earnings for the occupation in this report are \$17.92; this is below the living wage for one single adult in Los Angeles County (\$24.03). Exhibit 5 shows the average hourly wage for the occupation in this report, for entry-level to experienced workers.

Exhibit 5: Average hourly earnings for target occupation, Los Angeles and Orange counties



JOB POSTINGS

There were 314 online job postings related to *dental laboratory technicians* listed in the past 12 months in Los Angeles and Orange counties. Job postings were analyzed for the most common job titles, skills, and employers associated with the target occupation in this report (Exhibit 6).

Exhibit 6: Most commonly requested job titles, skills and employers in job postings, Los Angeles and Orange counties

Top Job Titles	Top Skills	Top Employers
• Dental laboratory technicians • Dental technicians • Sterilization technicians • Dental ceramists • Comfort specialists • Dental treatment coordinators • CAD/CAM technicians	• Anatomy • Dentistry • Sterilization • Dentures • Infection control • Dental prosthetics fabrication	• Glidewell Dental • G&H Dental Arts • Paramount Dental Studio • Stefan Dostal Dental Laboratory • University of Southern California

In the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region, 19% of the target job postings listed a minimum educational requirement. Exhibit 7 details the number and percentage of job postings by educational level.

Exhibit 7: Education levels requested in job postings for target occupation, Los Angeles and Orange counties

Education Level	Job Postings	% of Job Postings
Bachelor's degree	5	8%
Associate degree	4	7%
High school diploma or vocational training	52	85%

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) lists a high school diploma or equivalent as the typical entry-level education for *dental laboratory technicians* (Exhibit 8). However, the national-level data indicates 50% of workers in the field have completed some college or an associate degree as their highest level of educational attainment. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) lists the following typical entry-level education levels for the occupation in this report:

Exhibit 8: Entry-level education preferred by employers nationally, Bureau of Labor Statistics

Occupation	Education Level
<i>Dental laboratory technicians</i>	High school diploma or equivalent

EDUCATIONAL SUPPLY

Community College Supply

Exhibit 9 shows the annual and three-year average number of awards conferred by community colleges in the related TOP code: Dental Laboratory Technology (1240.30). The only two community colleges in the state with completions in the last three years are LA City and Pasadena. Currently, there are no other postsecondary institutions in the greater LA/OC region that have conferred awards that train for *dental laboratory technicians* in the past three years.

Exhibit 9: Regional community college awards (certificates and degrees), 2023-2025

TOP Code	Program	College	2022-23 Awards	2023-24 Awards	2024-25 Awards	3-Year Average
1240.30	Dental Laboratory Technician	LA City	29	26	20	25
		Pasadena	10	9	14	11
		LA Subtotal	39	35	34	36
Supply Total/Average			39	35	34	36

Exhibit 10 displays the community college awards broken down by award type. In this case, the majority of awards issued by community colleges are certificates (81%).

Exhibit 10: Community college awards by award type, 2023-2025

Award Type	# of Awards	% of Awards
A.A./A.S. degrees	7	19%
Certificates	29	81%
Total	36	100%

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DATA SOURCES

POWERED BY



- O*NET Online
- Lightcast (formerly Emsi)
- Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)
- California Employment Development Department, Labor Market Information Division, OES
- California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Management Information Systems (MIS)
- Self-Sufficiency Standard at the Center for Women's Welfare, University of Washington
- Chancellor's Office Curriculum Inventory (COCI 2.0)

Important Disclaimer: All representations included in this report have been produced from primary research and/or secondary review of publicly and/or privately available data and/or research reports. Efforts have been made to qualify and validate the accuracy of the data and the reported findings; however, neither the Centers of Excellence, COE host District, nor California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office are responsible for applications or decisions made by recipient community colleges or their representatives based upon components or recommendations contained in this study.

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